

September 15, 2007

Mr. Rich Gannon
North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources
Division of Water Quality
1617 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1617
Rich.Gannon@ncmail.net

RE: Proposed Jordan Reservoir Nutrient Supply Strategy

Dear Mr. Gannon:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed Jordan Reservoir Nutrient Supply Strategy. I am a Chatham County citizen who lives within the Jordan Lake watershed, one mile from the lake. I also am currently the Chair of the Chatham County Environmental Review Board, whose mission is to advise the Chatham County Board of Commissioners on environmental matters. My comments therefore reflect those of a citizen with a deep understanding of the environmental concerns that face Chatham County in this era of rapid growth in the Jordan Lake watershed.

As I am sure you are aware, the Jordan Lake watershed is under tremendous development pressure, and sedimentation events have become commonplace from construction activities in the watershed.

My family and I have monitored water quality for the Haw River Assembly in Parkers Creek off Big Woods Road for more than 3 years (since May 2004) on a quarterly basis.

Photo A – Rhiannon Weakley at Parkers Creek, March 26, 2006



During this time, we have watched (and documented) the decline in water quality due to sediment coming from The Legacy and other residential development projects within the Parkers Creek watershed.

As you may know, Parkers Creek drains directly to the Parkers Creek Recreation Area of Jordan Lake, a popular swimming area, especially for young families because it is protected by heavy wave action as this area is impounded by the US64 causeway.

Here is a photo of a UT to Parkers Creek off Big Woods Road earlier this year, looking downstream toward Jordan Lake.

Photo B – UT of Parkers Creek, February 28, 2007



This stream has been this muddy for over a year and a half now (since construction began in Fall 2005), and is entirely due to one residential development, The Legacy at Jordan Lake, which drains to this UT. This UT also flows into the Parkers Creek Recreation Area.

The Legacy is one residential development of many in the watershed impacting water quality in the immediate Jordan Lake area, let alone throughout its watershed. The effects of these developments on water quality in the Jordan Lake watershed are just beginning to become apparent and need more attention by the State.

As a parent of young children, I've been asked over the last several years by other parents whether or not it is safe to swim in Jordan Lake. I usually respond by advising parents to swim south of the US64 bridge (not in the Parkers Creek Recreation Area). With the sedimentation and stormwater runoff that's occurring from development upstream of the US64 causeway, and the more than 75 million gallons per day of wastewater that is permitted to be discharged within the watershed, I personally don't take my own children swimming in Jordan Lake, not even south of the causeway. What a shame that citizens have to question whether or not it is safe to swim in the lake, or have reservations about swimming there. Admittedly, the last time I myself swam in Jordan Lake was as a graduate student in the 1990s, before I knew about the tremendous pollution permitted in the Jordan Lake watershed. I remember being very surprised at the amount of point and non-point source pollution that's allowed in a

watershed that drains to a water body used as a regional drinking water supply and recreation destination... and I remain surprised, and disappointed, a decade later.

Chatham County and its inhabitants are very dependent upon Jordan Lake for drinking water, recreation, wildlife habitat, and economic development. At a local level, we are working hard to protect the Jordan Lake watershed, but we need your help as we cannot do it alone. The State has a responsibility to protect its citizens and drinking water supplies.

I strongly urge you to adopt the nutrient rules as soon as possible, and to require that restrictions on nitrogen in wastewater be implemented in 2011 or sooner, not 2016.

Thank you very much for considering my comments, and the concerns of myself, my family, and our community.

Sincerely,

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